

(Washington, DC) - Representative Wally Herger (CA-2), Ranking Member of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade, today joined Ways and Means Ranking Member Jim McCrery, Phil English, Jerry Weller and Kevin Brady in touting the benefits of trade and the need to reauthorize Trade Promotion Authority. Below are Herger's prepared remarks. A picture of Herger speaking at the event can be found at: <http://www.house.gov/herger/photos.shtml>

"Most Americans don't recognize the benefits of trade, but they experience them everyday.

"In two days, the President's Trade Promotion Authority will expire. It is so important that the American people understand why TPA is so critical to our economy and workers and families. This is why:

"The United States is the number one trading nation in the world, with a globally integrated economy. Trade Promotion Authority allows us to negotiate market-opening free trade agreements with other countries, either on a bilateral level, or multi-lateral level.

"In my home district of Northern California, this means lower prices at the grocery store for families struggling on a tight budget, and new markets for farmers and other small businesses.

"Even though our free trade agreement partners make up only 7.3 percent of the global GDP, our exports to these countries comprise more than 42% of our total U.S. exports. Another critical aspect is jobs. One-in-ten jobs in the U.S. is dependent on exports. One-in-five factory jobs is trade dependent. These jobs pay between 13-18 percent more than average wages. With such robust economic growth, our unemployment rate is only 4.5 percent, leading other industrialized nations such as France whose unemployment rate is nearly double that. These are figures workers need to know.

Without TPA, countries won't come to the negotiating table and we risk losing market share around the globe, as we did when TPA, or its predecessor fast track, lapsed in the 1990s. This is because countries like China and blocks of nations like the European Union are busy working on trade agreements with each other that lock out American products and make our workers

and businesses less competitive in the global marketplace. We also need TPA to push for lower global trade barriers at the World Trade Organization.

"We have a narrowing window of opportunity to advance our American trade agenda. We don't have the choice to stand still. We either advance with TPA, or we move backward as other countries liberalize trade on their own. We've seen the destructive seeds of protectionism before in the period between the 1920's and 1950's, and we know how bad it was for American producers and our overall economy. We can't venture down that path again. We need Trade Promotion Authority and need to work for reauthorization now."